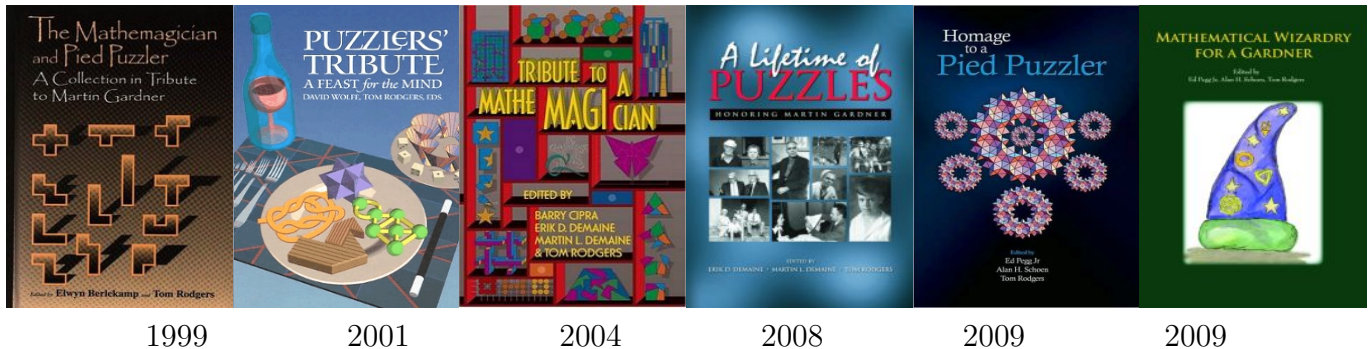


The Mathematician and the Pied Puzzler, 1999, AK Peters, ISBN 978-1-56881-204-5 (hbk), x+266 pp. by *Elwyn R Berlekamp and Tom Rodgers* (eds.)

A lifetime of puzzles. Honoring Martin Gardner, 2008, AK Peters, ISBN 978-1-56881-245-8 (hbk), x+349 pp. by *Erik D. Demaine, Martin L. Demain, Tom Rodgers* (eds.)

Mathematical wizardry for a Gardner, 2009, AK Peters, ISBN 978-1-56881-447-6 (hbk), xx+262 pp. by *Ed Pegg Jr., Alan H. Schoen, Tom Rodgers* (eds.)



Martin Gardner (1914-2010) has popularized mathematics through his many books and columns where he promotes the application of mathematics for recreational purposes. He invented new games, mathemagical tricks, new constructs like flexagons, etc. He has inspired a whole generation to enjoy mathematics. Thomas M. Rodgers (1943-2012), an enthusiastic puzzler took the initiative in 1993 to bring a bunch of fellow puzzle freaks, mathematicians and magicians together. This is bookmarked as the first *Gathering for Gardner* (G4G1). In 2007 a non-profit organization was formed: the *Gathering 4 Gardner, Inc.*. This organization wants to honor and promote Martin Gardner's work and ideas. One of the activities is to organize these G4G meetings that has now become an annual event (the G4G11 is organized in Atlanta, GA in March 2014). On or around 21 October (M. Gardner's birthday) local events are set up all over the world on the topic which is called *Celebration of Mind*.

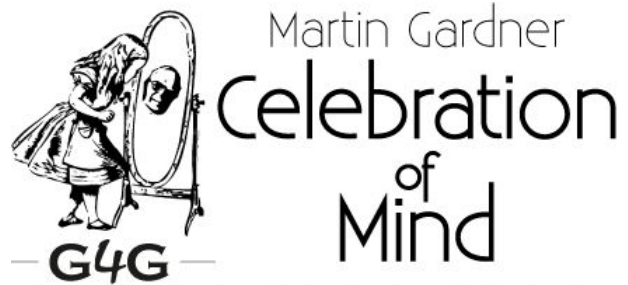


by A K Peters, now a sub-company of CRC Press

The pdf of the first book *The Mathematician and the Pied Puzzler* is freely available¹ courtesy of CRC Press. It basically consists of the proceedings for the G4G1 and it consists of three parts. In the first part some texts are devoted to Martin Gardner. The other two parts are much more extensive. The second is a collection of contributions by puzzlers (Donald Knuth is one of them) and there is a proposal for a classification system for mechanical puzzles and related puzzle objects. The third part groups the mathemagical subjects such as logical paradoxes, graphs, the game of life (automata), 3D mazes, optical problems with mirrors, Diophantine problems, etc.

The second book *Puzzlers' tribute. A feast for the mind* was briefly reviewed in this Newsletter (issue 43, May 2003). It contains the proceedings of the G4G2, G4G3 and G4G4. Also the third one *Tribute to a mathemagician* has been considered more extensively in this Newsletter (issue

Another activity is the editing and publication of books on these topics of interest to their members. Six books are mentioned on their website, of which the covers are displayed above (with the date of publication). All of them are published that is a division of Taylor & Francis.



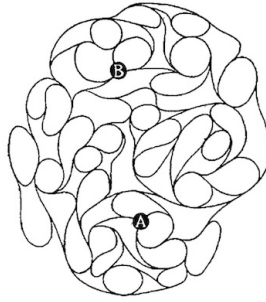
¹gathering4gardner.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/mathematicianpiedpuzzler.pdf

52, March 2005). It contains the proceedings of the G4G5 held in 2004.

Here I will have a closer look at books 4 and 6 that I have now in front of me. *A lifetime of puzzles. Honoring Martin Gardner* has 25 articles dedicated to Martin Gardner's 90th birthday and edited by Tom Rodgers (G4G puzzler of the first hour) together with father and son Martin and Erik Demaine (both lovers of mathematical art and puzzles, the latter a child prodigy and professor Computer Science at MIT²). Obviously in this volume, there are again articles about Martin Gardner, but they also succeeded in convincing many more contributors among which Colm Mulcahy, Persi Diaconis, Raymond Smullyan, Roger Penrose, Jerry Slocum, etc. There are historical papers on tangrams and on Luca Paciolo (a collaborator of Leonardo da Vinci). A diversity of papers discuss mazes and mechanical puzzles, burr puzzles, computer assisted mosaic portraits, tennis tournament scheduling, word games, etc. Most of the contributions are organized like research papers: some even got proofs and almost all have a reference list.



Luca Pacioli



railway mase



burr puzzles

The *Mathematical Wizardry for a Gardener* is the last in the row and together with the previous *Homage to a Pied Puzzler* it has mostly contributions from the G4G7 in 2006. It has two papers commemorating Frank Harary (1921-2005), a mathematician who specialized in graph theory and an excellent ambassador of mathematics for the non-mathematician. The remaining papers shows the usual mixture of puzzles and fun stories with a mathematical flavour. Subjects are for example the Ig Nobel prizes, paper folding, anamorphoses (extreme transformations that appeared in Renaissance paintings), board games, sphere packing, uncountable sets, graph-based games, spherical calculus, and two- and three-dimensional geometric puzzles.



Spherical weaving



Jordan curve



anamorphose

The subjects are too diverse to be discussed in detail here, but it should be clear what kind of topics are treated. Precisely the topics that also were so dear to Martin Gardner. There is no better way to honor and remember him. These are must-have books for anyone who is interested in recreational mathematics or anyone who enjoys being surprised by the fun and the beauty that mathematics can bring and you certainly don't have to be a mathematician for that.

Adhemar Bultheel

²He gave the Francqui lectures in Belgium in 2009.